

Portable Pocket Organizer

Cross-References to Related Applications

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The present application is a Continuation-In-Part of US patent application serial number 10/746,683 filed on 12/29/2003, currently still pending, the entire contents of which are herein incorporated fully by reference thereto.

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Technical Field

This invention relates to a device useful in organizing personal items. More particularly, it relates to an organizer for various and sundry personal items useful by members of a household during their normal interactions.

Background

20 Household settings typically contain many surfaces, such as wall surfaces, door surfaces, cabinet surfaces, ceilings, etc. Appliances within the kitchen have for quite some time been recognized as having surfaces onto which various items may be posted. Perhaps the most noteworthy of the appliances in this regard is the refrigerator, as the exterior and top surfaces of a refrigerator are quite well known to be a popular repository
25 for such diverse items as include books, photographs, children's artwork, grocery lists, pens, pencils, note boards, paper stock, mini-calculators, toys, mirrors, etc. Often being

constructed from sheet metal, it is convenient for many of the aforesaid items to be attached to the refrigerator by magnetic means.

The prior art is devoid of any teaching or suggestion of a system to keep small articles or items separated or sorted on an exterior surface of a kitchen appliance, such as a refrigerator. It would thus be advantageous if a organizer system could be provided for a refrigerator that allows various and sundry articles or items to be stored in a neat and organized fashion which enables the rapid retrieval and access to the items stored. It would also be advantageous if such an organizer system would be readily attachable to and removable from a refrigerator.

It is therefore one object of the present invention to provide an organizer system to enable storing various and sundry items on the exterior surface of an appliance, such as a refrigerator, in an organized fashion.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an organizer system to enable storing various and sundry items on the exterior surface of an appliance, such as a refrigerator, which is readily attachable to and detachable from the exterior surface of the appliance.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention provides a device useful for organizing various and sundry items used by members of a household, which is capable of being readily attached and detached from the exterior walls of an appliance such as a refrigerator. In one preferred embodiment, a device according to the invention comprises a panel having a front face, a rear face, a left side portion, a right side portion, a top end portion, and a bottom end portion. There is also at least one, and preferably a plurality of pockets disposed on the front face of the device. There is also a means for attachment of the entire construct to a surface of an appliance.

Thus, in one embodiment, the present invention provides a device useful for organizing various and sundry items used by members of a household, which device is capable of being readily attached and detached from the exterior walls of an appliance. The device comprises a panel portion having a front face, a rear face, a left side portion, a right side portion, a top end portion, and a bottom end portion. There is at least one pocket disposed on the front face of the panel. There is also a means for attachment of the panel to a flat surface.

In another embodiment, the invention provides a device useful for organizing various and sundry items which device comprises a construct comprising a first panel portion having a front face, a rear face, a left side portion, a right side portion, a top end portion, and a bottom end portion. The front face of the first panel portion includes at least one pocket disposed thereon. There is a second panel portion having a front face, a rear face, a left side portion, a right side portion, a top end portion, and a bottom end

portion. The left side portion of the second panel portion is hingedly attached to the right side portion of the first panel portion, There is also a means for attachment of the construct to a flat surface.

Brief Description of the Drawings

In the annexed drawings,

5 **FIG. 1** shows a frontal view of an organizer device according to one form of the invention;

FIG. 2 shows a rear side view of an organizer device according to one form of the invention;

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FIG. 3 shows a cross-sectional view of a two ply construction useful in providing an organizer according to the invention;

15 **FIG. 4** shows a perspective view of an organizer device according to an alternate form of the invention, from the front face perspective;

FIG. 5 shows a perspective view of an organizer device according to an alternate form of the invention, from the rear face perspective;

20 **FIG. 6** shows a perspective view of an organizer device according to one form of the invention, from the front face perspective;

FIG. 7 shows a perspective view of an organizer device according to one form of the invention, from the rear face perspective;

FIG. 8 shows a top view of the front face of an organizer device according to one form of the invention;

FIG. 9 shows a frontal view of an organizer device according to the invention disposed on the interior wall portion of a locker; and

FIG. 10 shows a frontal view of an organizer device according to the invention disposed on the exterior surface of a refrigerator.

Detailed Description

Referring to the drawings, and initially to **FIG. 1** there is shown a frontal view of an organizer device **10** according to one form of the invention which comprises a single panel. In this **FIG. 1**, there is a first panel portion **27**, which is preferably comprised of a fabric material, which may be any known fabric from which clothing and other wares are known by those skilled in the art to be made. According to a preferred form of the invention, the first panel portion **27** comprises a material selected from the group consisting of: woven fabrics, woven cotton, woven nylon, non-woven fabrics, non-woven polymer webs, canvas, polymeric sheets, and polymeric films. As used in this specification and the appended claims polymeric film includes all known polymeric films and includes without limitation polyolefin homopolymers, polyolefin copolymers, polyethylenes, polypropylenes, polystyrenes, and ethylene-vinyl acetate copolymers. Inherently, the first panel portion has a front face portion to which are preferably attached a plurality of pocket means **23** and **25**. According to a preferred form of the invention, at least one of the pocket means **23**, **25** are an open pocket means, and are thus adapted to receive items for easy stowage and retrieval, such as pens, pencils, money, toys, keys, notes, mirrors, and virtually anything known to those skilled in the art to be stowed in pockets. All or some of the pocket means may be affixed with a zipper, snaps, or other closure means which are known to those skilled in the art. There is also an optional fixture **166**, which may be a mirror, clipboard, or piece of sheet metal that is capable of having a magnet attached to it. The front face portion may also include clips, hooks, or loops of fabric useful for holding or affixing items desired by the user. All features

adhered to the front face portion of the panel may be adhered thereto by means such as stitching, magnetic means, or by adhesives known to those skilled in the art.

FIG. 2 shows a rear side view of an organizer device **10** according to one form of the invention as was shown in **FIG. 1**. In this **FIG. 2** is shown the rear face portion **291** of the device, which in this embodiment is shown to have a fastening means, which in this case is a strip of one portion **35** of a cooperatively connecting pair of hook and loop type fasteners adhered to the rear face portion **291** of the device **10**. This fastening means may be adhered to the rear face portion **291** of the panel using adhesives known in the art, or by stitching.

FIG. 3 shows an exploded cross-sectional view of a two ply construction useful in providing an organizer **10** according to one embodiment of the invention. In practice, the various elements shown in **FIG. 3** are held together so as to form a single construct which is reminiscent of a single sheet, and such suitable means for holding the elements together such as adhesives or stitching are suitably employed therefor. In this **FIG. 3**, there are shown sheets **121** of the fabric from which the organizer is comprised, and the location of an optional sheet of reinforcing material **131** disposed between the sheets **121**. Preferably, the reinforcing material **131** conforms substantially in geometric shape to the sheets **121**. In one preferred form of the invention, the reinforcing material is a sheet of cardboard. However, other materials are suitable for use as the reinforcing material, such as any material selected from the group consisting of: cardboard, wood, polypropylene, and polyethylene. **FIG. 3** also shows a plurality of magnets **112** disposed between the sheets **121**, which when assembled provide for the ready attachment of the device of the invention to a metallic surface to which magnets are attracted, such as the exterior

surfaces of an appliance, such as a refrigerator. It is preferred that the magnets are substantially planar so as to not bulge out from the construct. The present invention is also adapted to be adhered to any metallic surface, such as toolboxes, motor vehicles refrigeration units, etc., and the present invention is thus suitable as a tool caddy for persons working on automobiles, to cite but one example. The magnets 121 may be held in a stationary position between the other layers by stitching around the magnets, or by conventional adhesives known to those skilled in the art.

FIG. 4 shows a perspective view of the front face of a locker pocket organizer 10 according to an alternate form of the invention. **FIG. 4** shows such an organizer 10 to comprise a first panel portion 27, having a top side portion T1, bottom side portion B1, left side portion 70, and a right side portion 72. There is also a second panel portion 29, having a top side portion T2, bottom side portion B2, left side portion 73, and a right side portion 72. In this embodiment, the left side portion 73 of the second panel portion 29 is hingedly attached to the right side portion 71 of the first panel portion 27, so as to permit a folding of the first panel portion 27 with respect to the second panel portion 29 such that their front faces are capable of contacting one another upon such folding. Each of the front faces of the panel portions preferably include one or more pockets, 23 and 25, and may further include an elastic pen or pencil holder 15, and a clip 87 onto which various objects, such as a key ring, may be clipped and held in place, as was shown in the embodiment depicted in **FIG. 6**. The various pockets and other provisions on the faces of the panels are attached to the front faces of each of the panels by conventional means, such as by stitching. There is also one portion 31 of a complementary pair of a fastening means, which functions together with a second portion 33 of a fastening means to keep

the entire organizer of the invention in a closed position when it is folded. The fastening means may be snaps, zippers, hooks and eyes, or any fastening means known to those skilled in the art. It is most preferable that the fastening means collectively comprising the fastening means **31** and **33** is a hook and loop type fastening means, such as VELCRO® fastening means. In one form of this embodiment of the invention, each of the panel portions **27** and **29** of the organizing device **10** comprise a single layer of a fabric or other planar material selected from the group consisting of: woven cotton, woven nylon, non-woven fabrics, non-woven polymer webs, canvas, denim, and plastic vinyl.

According to an alternative form of this embodiment, the panels **27** and **29** are both comprised of the same single sheet of material set forth above, and the organizer as a whole is foldable at the location corresponding to the junctions of the right side portion **71** of the first panel **27** and the left side portion **73** of the second panel **29**. By such folding, the right and left panel portions are defined, and it is intended that the fold corresponds to the corner in a locker whose walls on which the inventive organizer is located.

In an alternate form of this embodiment of the invention, each of the panel portions **27** and **29** are each individual discrete sheets of material as set forth above, and are connected to one another by stitching or other conventional fastening means disposed along the junction of the right and left side portions of the panels. Thus, in this embodiment each of the panel portions **27** and **29** each have their own front face portion and rear face portion. Being attached to one another as described above and as shown in **FIG. 4** results in the front face portions of each of the panels collectively defining the

front face of the organizer 10 as a whole, and when laid on a flat surface, an organizer 10 according to this embodiment of the invention can exist in a substantially planar configuration, with its rear face portion on the flat surface and with its front face surface facing upwards.

5 In an alternate form of this embodiment of the invention, the panel portions 27 and 29 of the organizing device 10 are each composed of two layers (two-ply) of a fabric or other planar material selected, without limitation, from the group consisting of: woven cotton, woven nylon, non-woven fabrics, non-woven polymer webs, canvas, denim, and plastic vinyl. According to one embodiment of the invention 10, the panels 27 and 29
10 are each simultaneously comprised of the same two continuous sheets of a material set forth above, and the organizer as a whole is foldable at the location corresponding to the junction of the right side portion 71 of the first panel 27 and the left side portion 73 of the second panel 29. In this way each of the panels are two-ply and the entire organizer is thus seen to be built from two sheets of material, which is foldable at the location
15 specified as being the junction point of the first panel portion 27 and the second panel portion 29. As shown in FIG. 8 a set of parallel stitchings disposed at the intended points of folding of the organizer 10 are conveniently used in conjunction with a stitching around the entire perimeter of the organizer to form an interior compartment on each of the panels, within each of which is conveniently housed a sheet of planar reinforcing
20 material, such as cardboard or a sheet of a rigid polymer.

 In an alternate form of this embodiment, each of the panel portions 27 and 29 are each individual discrete two-ply sheet constructs of material as set forth above, and are connected to one another by stitching or other conventional fastening means disposed

along the junction of the right and left side portion of each of the panels. Thus, in such embodiment each of the panel portions **27** and **29** are discrete and each have a front face portion and a rear face portion. Being attached to one another as described above and as shown in **FIG. 4** results in the front face portions of each of the panels collectively
5 defining the front face of the organizer **10** as a whole, and when laid on a flat surface, an organizer **10** of the invention in this embodiment can exist in a substantially planar configuration, with its rear face portion on the flat surface and with its front face surface facing upwards. When the panel elements of the present invention according to this embodiment are each two-ply constructs, the invention lends itself well to having a
10 reinforcing material disposed between the two sheets of fabric or other planar material set forth above. In such embodiment, it is possible to use a very delicate or low-cost fabric which by itself would have caused the organizer of the invention to be somewhat flimsy, but by having a sheet of reinforcing material disposed between the layers in the two-ply construct for each panel portion, the strength of the organizer is greatly
15 increased. Suitable reinforcing materials include, without limitation, cardboard, wood, polypropylene, and polyethylene. In addition, a strip of magnetic material may also be contained inside the interstices between the plies when the panels are of two-ply construction, to assist in adhering the organizer of the invention to a metallic wall, such as is commonly found on the interior surfaces of student lockers.

20 **FIG. 5** depicts a perspective view of an organizer **10** according to an alternate form of the invention described in **FIG. 4** from the rear perspective, showing the first panel portion **27** and second panel portion **29**. There is one portion **35** of the complementary fastening means disposed on the rear face of the first panel portion,

which is preferably a hook and loop type fastener, but may be any fastening means known in the art. This fastening means is the means by which an organizer 10 according to the invention is hung onto a wall surface, and is preferably a hook and loop type fastener, as previously described. The interior of a typical locker includes three wall portions, and an organizer of this embodiment of the invention is contoured so that the width dimension of each of the panel portions 27 and 29 corresponds substantially with the width of two adjacent wall portions inside a locker. Thus, to hang an organizer according to this embodiment invention in a locker, one half of the fastening means which is intended to cooperatively function with the fastening means 35 is disposed on two of the three interior wall portions of the locker. This is readily accomplished in the case of hook and loop fastening means (such as VELCRO® fastening means) since strips of such hook and loop fasteners are commercially available having a strip of adhesive on its back side. Thus, a strip of hook and loop fastener which is complementary to that disposed 35 on the rear face portion of an organizer of the invention is first adhered to the inner walls of the locker. Next, the organizer is simply hung in place within the locker by pressing the fastening means 35 upon the walls of the locker.

FIG. 6 shows a perspective view of the front face of a pocket organizer 10 according to one alternate form of the invention which is well suited to be adhered to the interior walls of a student locker, such as the type commonly in use in schools. **FIG. 6** shows such an organizer 10 to comprise a first panel portion 3, having a top side portion **T1**, bottom side portion **B1**, left side portion **45**, and a right side portion **41**. There is also a second panel portion 5, having a top side portion **T2**, bottom side portion **B2**, left side portion **47**, and a right side portion **39**, in addition to a third panel portion 7, having a top

side portion **T3**, bottom side portion **B3**, left side portion **49**, and a right side portion **43**.

In this embodiment, the left side portion **47** of the second panel portion **5** is hingedly attached to the right side portion **41** of the first panel portion **3**, so as to permit a folding of the first panel portion **3** with respect to the second panel portion **5** such that their front

5 faces are capable of contacting one another upon such folding. The right side portion **39** of the second panel portion **5** is hingedly attached to the left side portion **49** of the third panel portion **7**, so as to permit a folding of the second panel portion **5** with respect to the third panel portion **7** such that their front faces are capable of contacting one another upon such folding. Each of the front faces of the panel portions preferably include one or

10 more pockets, **91**, **99**, **11**, **9**, and **13**, and may further include an elastic pen or pencil holder **15**, and a clip **87** onto which various objects, such as a key ring, may be clipped and held in place. The various pockets and other provisions on the faces of the panels are attached to the front faces of each of the panels by conventional means, such as by stitching. There is also one portion **17** of a complementary pair of a fastening means,

15 which functions together with a second portion **19** (**FIG. 7**) of a fastening means to keep the entire organizer of the invention in a closed position when it is folded. The fastening means may be snaps, zippers, hooks and eyes, or any fastening means known to those skilled in the art. It is most preferable that the fastening means collectively comprising the fastening means **19** and **17** is a hook and loop type fastening means, such as

20 VELCRO® fastening means. In one form of this embodiment of the invention, the panel portion **3**, **5**, and **7** of the organizing device **10** comprise a single layer of a fabric or other planar material selected from the group consisting of: woven cotton, woven nylon, non-woven fabrics, non-woven polymer webs, canvas, denim, and plastic vinyl. According

to one embodiment of the invention 10, the panels 3, 5, and 7 are all comprised of the same single sheet of material set forth above, and the organizer as a whole is foldable at location corresponding to the junction of the right side portion 41 of the first panel 3 and the left side portion 47 of the second panel 5, and is also foldable at the location of the junction of the right side portion 39 of the second panel 5 and the left side portion 49 of the third panel 7. In an alternate form of the invention, each of the panel portions 3, 5, and 7 are each individual discrete sheets of material as set forth above, and are connected to one another by stitching or other conventional fastening means disposed along the junctions of the right and left side portions of the panels. Thus, in this embodiment each of the panel portions 3, 5, and 7 each have their own front face portion and a rear face portion. Being attached to one another as described above and as shown in FIG. 6 results in the front face portions of each of the panels collectively defining the front face of the organizer 10 as a whole, and when laid on a flat surface, an organizer 10 of the invention can exist in a substantially planar configuration, with its rear face portion on the flat surface and with its front face surface facing upwards.

In an alternate form of this embodiment of the invention, each of the panel portions 3, 5, and 7 of the organizing device 10 are each composed of two layers (two-ply) of a fabric or other planar material selected, without limitation, from the group consisting of: woven cotton, woven nylon, non-woven fabrics, non-woven polymer webs, canvas, denim, and plastic vinyl. According to such embodiment, the panels 3, 5, and 7 are each simultaneously comprised of the same two continuous sheets of a material set forth above, and the organizer as a whole is foldable at locations corresponding to the junctions of the right side portion 41 of the first panel 3 and the left side portion 47 of the

second panel 5, and the right side portion 39 of the second panel 5 and the left side portion 49 of the third panel 7. In this way each of the panels are two-ply, and the entire organizer is thus seen to be built from two sheets of material, which is foldable at the locations specified as being the junction points of the first panel portion 3 with the second panel portion 5, and the second panel portion 5 with the third panel portion 7. **FIG. 8** shows one such embodiment which utilizes a set of parallel stitchings 69 disposed at the intended points of folding of the organizer 10. By employing such stitchings 69, and a stitching around the entire perimeter of the organizer, an interior compartment is formed within each of the panel portions 3, 5, and 7 in which is conveniently housed a sheet of planar reinforcing material, such as cardboard or a sheet of a rigid polymer. The two ply construct is shown in cross sectional view in **FIG. 3**, showing the fabric 121 from which the organizer is comprised, and the reinforcing material 131, which in one preferred form of the invention is a sheet of cardboard. In an alternate form of this embodiment, each of the panel portions 3, 5, and 7 are each individual discrete two-ply sheet constructs of material as set forth above, and are connected to one another by stitching or other conventional fastening means disposed along the junctions of the right and left side portions of each of the panels. Thus, in such embodiment each of the panel portions 3, 5, and 7 are discrete and each have a front face portion and a rear face portion. Being attached to one another as described above and as shown in **FIG. 6** results in the front face portions of each of the panels collectively defining the front face of the organizer 10 as a whole, and when laid on a flat surface, an organizer 10 of the invention in this embodiment can exist in a substantially planar configuration, with its rear face portion on the flat surface and with its front face surface facing upwards.

When the panel elements of the present invention according to this embodiment are each two-ply constructs, the invention lends itself well to having a reinforcing material disposed between the two sheets of fabric or other planar material set forth above. In such embodiment, it is possible to use a very delicate or low-cost fabric which by itself would have caused the organizer of the invention to be somewhat flimsy, but by having a sheet of reinforcing material disposed between the layers in the two-ply construct for each panel portion, the strength of the organizer is greatly increased. Suitable reinforcing materials include, without limitation, cardboard, wood, polypropylene, and polyethylene. In addition, a strip of magnetic material may also be contained inside the interstices between the plies when the panels are of two-ply construction, to assist in adhering the organizer of the invention to a metallic wall, such as is commonly found on the interior surfaces of student lockers.

FIG. 7 depicts a perspective view of an organizer **10** according to one form of the invention from the rear perspective, showing the first panel portion **3**, second panel portion **5**, and third panel portion **7**. There is one portion **19** of the complementary fastening means disposed on the rear face of the first panel portion, which is preferably a hook and loop type fastener, but may be any fastening means known in the art. In addition, there is a fastening means **21** disposed across the rear face of the organizer **10**. This fastening means is the means by which an organizer **10** according to the invention is hung onto a wall surface, and is preferably a hook and loop type fastener. As is known in the art, hook and loop type fastening means, and other fastening means comprise two cooperatively connecting half portions. The interior of a typical locker includes three wall portions, and an organizer of the invention is contoured so that the width dimension

of each of the panel portions corresponds substantially with the width of each of the three wall portions inside the locker. Thus, to hang an organizer according to the invention in a locker, one half of the fastening means which is intended to cooperatively function with the fastening means **21** is disposed on the interior wall portions of the locker. This is readily accomplished in the case of hook and loop fastening means (such as VELCRO® fastening means) since strips of such hook and loop fasteners are commercially available having a strip of adhesive on its back side. Thus, a strip of hook and loop fastener which is complementary to that disposed **21** on the rear face portion of an organizer of the invention is first adhered to the inner walls of the locker. Next, the organizer is simply hung in place within the locker by pressing the fastening means **21** upon the walls of the locker.

FIG. 9 shows a frontal view of an organizer according to the invention **10** disposed on the interior wall portion of a locker which is contained in a panel of lockers **37**. In this embodiment, the organizer **10** is held in place either by a magnetic material attached to the organizer or contained in its interstices when of two-ply construction, or by a hook and loop type fastening means disposed on the rear face of the organizer.

FIG. 10 shows a frontal view of an organizer device according to the invention **10** disposed on the exterior surface of a refrigerator.

Consideration must be given to the fact that although this invention has been described and disclosed in relation to certain preferred embodiments, obvious equivalent modifications and alterations thereof will become apparent to one of ordinary skill in this art upon reading and understanding this specification and the claims appended hereto. The present invention includes all possible combinations of the features recited in any

one of the various embodiments described in this specification with any number or permutation of the features disclosed in reference to any other embodiment. The present invention further includes all possible combinations of the features recited in any one of the various claims appended hereto with the features recited in any one or more of each
5 of the remaining claims. Accordingly, the presently disclosed invention is intended to cover all such modifications, alterations, and combinations.